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RECENT BOOKS IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL ETHICS, EDUCATION, AND PRACTICAL RELIGION

In the first book before us,¹ the author's own summary of his patient and conscientious discussion states the essential points of his volume:

The central thought of this treatise is that the Christian life is the highest mode of moral life of which man is capable, and is distinguished from lower forms of ethical life by its own characteristic manifestations. But the Christian is a man; on the basis of his manhood a nobler manhood is developed through the work of the Holy Spirit. . . . We find the source of our knowledge of ethical facts and principles, in the first instance, in the normal constitution of man, then in the experience of Christians, and, thirdly, in the Holy Scriptures as bringing the believer into vital relation to Christ.

Part I deals with the nature of the ethics of the Christian life: the moral agent and the disorder of the moral nature, the remedy for moral disorder. Part II discusses the scope of the ethics of the Christian life: all duty rests on the holy will of God, duty to self, duty to society, duty to nature, duty to God. Part III considers the method of the ethics of the Christian life. The church is incompetent to form a policy relating to such social problems as temperance reforms, relations of capital and labor, the care of the poor; it has not the knowledge, and it is not intrusted with adequate power. But individual members of the church should aid where the church as an organization has no duty. It may be permissible, however, to add that "Christian Ethics" is by no means confined to the duties of the church as an organization; that action of the state must also be brought under the control of right and obligation; that the entire community has duties; and that these duties must be discovered and framed into laws, regulations of administration, maxims of custom and sentiment. Studies of ethics written from the ecclesiastical point of view have their value, but they must necessarily leave the most perplexing, complicated, and pressing problems of duty either untouched or but superficially treated. This valuable work brings us only to the margin of that vast area of study of right, obligation, and duty which is cultivated by the special social sciences and by practical sociology; and, as sure as this world is of God, these scientific disciplines will be found necessary to the complete "science of the end, the law, and the motive of obligatory conduct as determined in the light of the Christian revelation." The work under review is a contribution to only one tract of that larger field.

¹ *The Ethics of the Christian Life, or the Science of Right Living.* By Henry E. Robins. Philadelphia: Griffith & Rowland Press, 1904. 488 pages. \$2, net.

During the past five years, much to its advantage, moral and religious education has come under the influence of the psychologists, the students of the history of religion, and the most competent philosophers of education. While Professor Coe's last volume² shows at many points the results of his personal investigation, the particular increments to knowledge are not conspicuous. It is in the breadth, courage, and sanity of his survey of the social situation that the chief merit of his work is found. The author defines his purpose to be to "bring the broadest philosophy of education into the closest relation to practice; to show how principles lead directly to methods," and to "exhibit the principles and forces of religious and moral education in their highest concreteness as factors in the general movement of human life." The standpoint taken is that which has been fairly won by the development of Christianity in life and criticism; that human nature is not complete in the highest attainable sense without the life in God; that no single subject of knowledge is comprehended so long as it is isolated from the deepest facts of the spirit. Hence the child should be treated as born for this experience, as having a right to claim help to realize it through the concerted activity of family, school, church, government. With great clearness and force the author insists on the truth that education is the unfolding of the entire personality as a vital unity, and not merely the passive reception of certain detached matters of knowledge, as reading, writing, arithmetic, and theological formulas. The young scholar does not shrink from breaking a lance in direct encounter with the most honored veterans of education and theology when the eternal interests of the child seem to him to demand a champion. Especially noteworthy is his acceptance of the "major premise" in the claim of the Catholics, that education must include religion, while he properly refuses their "minor premise" when they ask for a division of the school fund.

There is need of instruction of the young in the duties of modern society with its complicated problems, and many attempts have been made to furnish textbooks suitable for the purpose. The societies of ethical culture have, by virtue of their exceptional position, made special efforts to meet this need, and important contributions may be expected from them. Such textbooks must be graded, in order to be adapted to young persons of different stages of development; the material should be concrete; discussion and conversation should be stimulated; proverbs, poetry, and classic prose should serve to adorn the doctrine; brief summaries should be furnished, so that much meaning can be carried away in neat form for

² *Education in Religion and Morals*. By George Albert Coe. Chicago: Revell, 1904. 434 pages. \$1.35.

memory. All these criteria are met in very high degree by the books of Mr. Sheldon,³ who has put each lesson to the test of use with classes during the years the work was in manuscript form. The religious factor is almost entirely passed over in silence, according to the design of the author, who omits religion, he says, because it creates division, and because home and church can add religious teachings at points where the teacher thinks best. Paul Natorp has said that the claims of ethical law are also in dispute.⁴ In the book on citizenship the catholic expressions of faith in God quoted from the noble utterances of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln will be more widely accepted than many of the moral instructions of the author who himself, at the end, rises, for a moment, into the sublime realm of the eternal life. The very spirit of religion breathes through all the pages, and one can easily believe that the author felt at times a keen sense of self-repression when he felt obliged to omit reference to this supreme interest of humanity. The work as a whole is not adequate and does not claim to be complete; but whoever writes on this subject hereafter will gladly acknowledge his obligation to this genial and faithful teacher of duty; and any religious teacher will find many valuable suggestions in respect to both matter and method of moral education.

The recent increase of interest in religious education makes this publication⁵ timely. The volume before us includes catechisms of the sixteenth century from southern Germany, from Alsace, the Pfalz, Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria. We are carried back to the brave days of Luther and his contemporaries, and we read their German and Latin forms, follow their order of explanation of the early creeds of the church, the Decalogue, and other summaries of theological and ethical belief. For the most part the editor gives us simply the original documents, but adds brief introductions, interpretations, and references to literature.

The conflict between clericalism and the secularists of France has provoked a discussion of the duty of the state to supervise and improve the scientific education of priests. The government of France subsidizes the larger churches, but makes no requirement as to the qualifications of their teachers and priests. This is dangerous to the social order, since

³ *Ethics for the Young*. By Walter L. Sheldon. Three volumes: "The Study of Habits;" "Duties in the Home and Family;" "Citizenship and the Duties of a Citizen." Chicago: Welch, 1904, \$1.25 per volume.

⁴ *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der Humanität*.

⁵ *Quellen zur Geschichte des kirchlichen Unterrichts in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands zwischen 1530 und 1600*. Eingeleitet, herausgegeben und zusammenfassend dargestellt von Johann Michael Reu. I. Teil. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1904. 847 pages. M. 16.

ignorant and fanatical clergymen are necessarily in antagonism to all the aspirations of progressive men who possess the outlook of modern science and philosophy. The state should give liberty of teaching, and should not itself become oppressive and guilty of persecution; but it should require the moral and intellectual leaders to pass state examinations as a guaranty of their fitness to be public instructors. This is the argument of the author of this work,⁶ and he supports his positions by numerous citations.

Among the important topics discussed in this volume⁷ are: the origin and history of the books of the Bible and of the English translations; the reasons for personal study of the Bible; methods of studying the Bible. The methods described and illustrated are: study of the Bible by periods; study by books; study of Bible characters; sermons and addresses; scenes and incidents; and topical studies. There is added a chapter on promoting Bible study by exposition in the pulpit. The author does not enter the field of teaching as distinguished from preaching. The style is simple and clear, although the range of subjects required too much condensation. The critical standpoint is quite conservative. The historical sketches are compiled from ordinary sources.

Dr. Conley has published a series of simple, clear, popular lectures⁸ given at first to a woman's club in Omaha. He treats the character and composition of the Bible, manuscripts, translations, light from monuments; and deals with such problems as the relation of the Bible to science, art, ethics, woman, education, progress. His point of view is that of one who reveres the Book, and yet believes that a Christian can have his mind open to all new revelations of truth.

The brilliant, popular preacher and lecturer has printed some of the bright and telling sentences with which he has been wont to draw together the immense audiences of the Temple.⁹ The little volume here noticed is full of suggestions for youth, and is suited to inspire and guide.

This fragment of German pietism¹⁰ breathes the spirit of a devout life.

⁶ *La réforme intellectuelle du clergé et la liberté d'enseignement.* Par P. Saintyve. Paris: Nourry, 1904. 341 pages.

⁷ *Bible Study Popularized* By Frank T. Lee. Chicago: Winona Publishing Co., 1904. 315 pages.

⁸ *The Bible in Modern Light.* By John Wesley Conley. Philadelphia: Griffith & Rowland Press, 1904. 238 pages.

⁹ *The New Day; or, Fresh Opportunities.* By Russell H. Conwell. Philadelphia: Griffith & Rowland Press, 1904. 117 pages.

¹⁰ *Outlines of Pastoral Theology.* Translated and edited by William Hastie. Edinburgh: Clark; New York: Scribner, 1904. 78 pages. \$0.75, net.

The substance of its thought has been assimilated in the larger works on the duties of ministers.

Dr. Schäfer is one of the most distinguished leaders of the Inner Mission of the Evangelical Church of Germany, and he has gathered up in these annual reports¹¹ accounts of many of the most significant facts about modern methods of caring for cripples. While the Altona home and school for cripples receives special attention, the student will find statistics and descriptions of institutions in various countries, and the beautiful photographic illustrations almost serve in place of visits of observation. Even the technical processes of teaching and training are so minutely explained that the general reader can appreciate the marvelous achievements of these institutions.

In the treatise of M. Rivière¹² the reader will find all the essential features of a philanthropy which has been tested in Germany, France, England, and the United States, and which, within its natural limits, produces excellent results.

Without doubt the writer of this curious volume¹³ has gone about his work in earnest, and his discussion bears the marks of sincerity, of prolonged thought, and of considerable reading. He is quite certain that honesty is not to be found in endowed colleges (p. vii), and he makes representations of their cruel treatment of students in examinations which might furnish amusement to our lusty athletes (p. 183). He closes the controversy over the place of Greek by calling the classics "trashy literature" (p. 182). Christianity is fictitious. There are more assertions than arguments, and enough confidence in his own conclusions to furnish several systems of cosmic philosophy. Perhaps there are a few new ideas, but it requires a tedious journey to come upon them.

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SOME RECENT LITERATURE IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Any characterization by Professor Pfeiderer of a great figure in the history of religious thought is of unusual interest. His memorial address¹ delivered on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of Herder's

¹¹ *Jahrbuch der Krüppelfürsorge*. Von Theodor Schäfer. Hamburg: Agentus des Rauhen Hauses, 1899-1903.

¹² *La terre et l'atelier: Jardins ouvriers*. Par Louis Rivière. Paris: Lecoffre, 1904. 219 pages.

¹³ *The Socialization of Humanity; A System of Monistic Philosophy*. By Charles Kendall Franklin. Chicago: Kerr, 1904. 481 pages. \$2.

¹ *Herder: Rede zur Gedankfeier im Rathaus zu Berlin am 16. Dezember 1903* Von Otto Pfeiderer. Berlin: Reimar, 1904. 31 pages. M. 0.50.